

Message Text

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ACTION CU-04

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8103
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 18295

STATE FOR CU/ARTS, CU/EE, EUR/SOV; LENINGRAD FOR P&C;
USIA FOR IEU

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SUBJECT: EXCHANGES: CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS (CU/ARTS): ST.
PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA USSR TOUR -- NOVEMBER 22 - DECEMBER 21, 1975

1. SUMMARY: FOUR WEEK TOUR OF ST. PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA WAS HAMPERED BY WEATHER, POOR GOSK PLANNING AND NEARLY DISASTROUS FAILURE BY PAN AM TO SHIP THE INSTRUMENTS WITH THE ORCHESTRA. NEVERTHELESS, ORCHESTRA WAS ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED BY PRIMARILY SRO AUDIENCES, MET ON PERSONAL LEVEL WITH HUNDREDS OF MUSICIANS, COMPOSERS AND MUSIC CRITICS, AND RECEIVED EXCELLENT COVERAGE FROM SOVIET PRESS AND TV. THROUGHOUT TOUR, ORCHESTRA EXHIBITED HIGHEST STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONALISM MATCHED WITH TREMENDOUS ENERGY IN PERSONAL CONTACT WORK, MAKING ITS TOUR TREMENDOUS SUCCESS. END SUMMARY.

2. PERFORMANCES AND AUDIENCES. LENINGRAD'S SRO PREMIERE WAS TOUGHEST AUDIENCE ON TOUR. IT SEEMED TENSE AND APPLAUDED POLITELY UNTIL COMPLETION OF FINAL PIECE. WILD APPLAUSE AND SHOUTING THEN DEMONSTRATED CRITICAL APPROVAL AND SPURRED ORCHESTRA TO THREE ENCORES. EVEN THIRTY MINUTES AFTER ORCHESTRA LEFT STANGE, MANY LISTENERS REMAINED IN SEATS DISCUSSING PERFORMANCE AND APPLAUDING ANYONE WHO APPEARED ON STAGE.

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LATER PERFORMANCES IN LENINGRAD, KIEV, MINSK, TBILISI,

BAKU, YEREVAN AND MOSCOW WERE ENTHUSIASTICALLY APPLAUDED DURING PERFORMANCES AS WELL AS AT END. ONE AUDIENCE IN YEREVAN REMAINED EIGHTY PERCENT IN PLACE AND CONTINUED TO APPLAUD FOR MORE THAN TEN MINUTES AFTER ORCHESTRA HAD LEFT STAGE, FORCING CONDUCTOR TO RETURN FOR FINAL BOW. MANY FROM AUDIENCE ASKED WHY MORE MODERN AMERICAN MUSIC DID NOT APPEAR ON PROGRAM AND WERE TOLD THAT GOSK HAD REJECTED SEVERAL ORCHESTRA SUGGESTIONS.

3. CONTACT WITH MUSICIANS, COMPOSERS, AND MUSICAL PUBLIC. TEN ORCHESTRA MEMBER STUDIED RUSSIAN PRIOR TO TOUR, LOOKING FORWARD TO CONTACTS WITH SOVIET MUSICIANS. FOLLOWING CONCERTS IN LENINGRAD, KIEV, TBILISI, BAKU, YEREVAN AND MOSCOW, DRESSING ROOMS FILLED WITH SOVIET MUSICIANS, COMPOSERS, CRITICS, AND FANS TO DISCUSS EVERYTHING FROM TECHNICAL MUSICAL DETAILS AND AMERICAN AND SOVIET COMPOSERS TO HOCK. APPOINTMENTS OFTEN WERE MADE FOR LATER MEETINGS, AND ADDRESSES AND PRESENTS OF RECORDS, SHEET MUSIC, REEDS, WERE EXCHANGED. DIRECTOR DAVIES MADE CALLS ON COMPOSERS UNION IN LENINGRAD WHERE AGREEMENT WAS MADE TO EXCHANGE MUSIC AND ARRANGE FOR PERFORMANCES IN THE TWO COUNTRIES. AT CONSERVATORY IN KIEV A LIVELY DISCUSSION ABOUT MUSIC TRAINING AND MUSICIANS' LIFE TOOK PLACE WITH THE RECTOR, PRO-RECTOR, CONDUCTOR OF THE CONSERVATORY'S CHAMBER ORCHESTRA AND STUDENTS. IN GEORGIA SPCO WAS CONSTANT GUEST OF TBILISI CHAMBER ORCHESTRA WHICH ARRANGED TWO SPECIAL REHEARSALS FOR SPCO, SECOND OF WHICH WAS JOINT REHEARSAL. GEORGIAN ORCHESTRA ALSO ARRANGED MASSIVE FEAST, AND EXCHANGED MUSIC, ADDRESSES AND GIFTS. SPCO VISITED YEREVAN CONSERVATORY TWICE AND CARRIED OUT FULL PROGRAMS ON WIND MUSIC, HARPSICHORD, CELLO AND PIANO. MANY PERSONAL CONTACTS WERE MADE AND SEVERAL ORCHESTRA MUSICIANS PRACTICED WITH FELLOW SOVIET MUSICIANS. IN SPITE OF LIMITED TIME IN MOSCOW, ORCHESTRA CARRIED OUT FULL PROGRAM AT CONSERVATORY FOR OVER THREE HUNDRED STUDENTS, MUSICIANS AND COMPOSERS. DIRECTOR DAVIES ESTABLISHED SUCH EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW CHAMBER ORCHESTRA DIRECTOR BARSHAI THAT DAVIES WILL INVESTIGATE POSSIBILITY OF INVITING BARSHAI TO SAINT PAUL -- PERHAPS VIA IV GRANT (SEE SEPTTEL) UNCLASSIFIED

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FOR FURTHER EXCHANGE OF MUSICAL IDEAS. DAVIES WILL CONTACT CU/EE. AMBASSADOR'S RECEPTION AND LUNCH FOR 150 IN MOSCOW ENCOURAGED ADDITIONAL VALUABLE CONTACTS INCLUDING SOVIET MUSIC COPYRIGHT SPECIALISTS WHO WILL MEET WITH EMBOFFS CONCERNING INCREASED TWO WAY EXCHANGE OF MUSIC AND SOVIET MUSIC CRITICS WHO DID NOT KNOW OF P&C MUSIC COLLECTION AND WILL BORROW RECORDS IN NEW YEAR. MINSK WAS SINGLE EXCEPTION TO WARM AND FREE

CONTACTS. FOLLOWING FIRST PERFORMANCE, GUARDS PREVENTED PUBLIC FROM MEETING ORCHESTRA BY PHYSICALLY THROWING THEM OUT BACK DOOR OF CONCERT HALL. HALL DIRECTOR DENIED SUCH WAS CASE TO DEPT. AND EMB ESCORTS AT VERY MOMENT TWO GUARDS THREW OUT A LOCAL FLUTE PLAYER. FOLLOWING MORNING, ESCORTS FORMALLY PROTESTED TO DIRECTOR AND HE PROMISED TO ENCOURAGE CONTACTS THAT NIGHT. MUSICIANS ALLOWED IN THAT NIGHT INCLUDED FOUR DRUNKS AND THREE OTHERS, NONE OF WHOM WAS CAPABLE OF DISCUSSING MUSIC. WITH THIS EXCEPTION, TOUR WAS MAGNIFICENT SUCCESS IN STIMULATING PERSONAL CONTACTS. SPCO MEMBERS WERE ENERGETIC, ENTHUSIASTIC, AND TALENTED IN THIS VITAL ASPECT OF PERFORMING ARTS EXCHANGES.

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ACTION CU-04

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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 MOSCOW 18295

STATE FOR CU/ARTS, CU/EE, EUR/SOV; LENINGRAD FOR P&C;
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4. PLANNING. GOSK FUMBLING OF ADVANCE SPCO SCHEDULE HAS BEEN COVERED IN EARLIER CABLES. HOTELS, HALLS, TRANSPORTATION WERE SPECIFIED ONLY THREE DAYS BEFORE ORCHESTRA'S ARRIVAL AND THEN: HOTEL IN MINSK WAS NOT AS STATED; HALL FOR FIRST PERFORMANCE IN YEREVAN WAS NOT AS STATED; AND FOUR OF SEVEN FLIGHTS WERE GIVEN WITH INCORRECT FLIGHT TIMES (ONE ERROR IN EXCESS OF EIGHT HOURS). GOSK WAS INFORMED OF PROPERTY SIZES IN INITIAL LETTER PROPOSING SPCO, BUT INFORMED ESCORTS IN LENINGRAD THAT WARDROBES AND INSTRUMENTS CRATES WOULD NOT FIT ON PLANE AND HAD TO BE UNPACKED AND CONTENTS HAND CARRIED THROUGHOUT TOUR. DESPITE PROBLEMS AT GOSK HEADQUARTERS AND

ADVERSE CONDITIONS, TOUR MANAGER AND THREE INTERPRETERS ON
TOUR WORKED HARD TO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES AND ASSIST SPCO MEMBERS.

5. TRANSPORTATION. WINTER AIR TRAVEL IN SOVIET UNION
IN UNCOMFORTABLE, UNHEALTHY, UNRELIABLE, AND OCCASIONALLY
DANGEROUS. SPCO ARRIVED IN LENINGRAD IN SNOW STORM WITHOUT
THEIR INSTRUMENTS, DUE ARBITRARY UNLOADING SAME BY PAN AM
IN NEW YORK. PAN AM REP IN COPENHAGEN STATEMENT
TO DEPT ESCORT THAT ALL INSTRUMENTS WERE RECEIVED AND
WOULD BE LOADED ABOARD SAS FLIGHT TO LENINGRAD PROVED
"ERROR" WHEN ESCORT CHECKED WITH SAS. DAY AND NIGHT
EFFORTS BY DEPT., EMB, GOSK AND ESCORTS FINALLY
ACHIEVED DELIVERY OF INSTRUMENTS ON MORNING OF PREMIERE.
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COMMENT: DEPT SHOULD ASSURE THAT WHATEVER CARRIER IS
USED WILL GUARANTEE SHIPMENT OF GROUP AND PROPERTIES
ON SAME PLANE. IN EVENT PAN AM WILL NOT GUARANTEE, POST
REQUESTS EXCEPTION TO AMERICAN CARRIER RULE TO FACILITATE
SEARCH FOR GUARANTEE NECESSARY TO TIGHTLY SCHEDULED
PERFORMING ARTS TOURS. END COMMENT. FLIGHT TO KIEV DELAYED
BY POOR WEATHER FORCING CANCELLATION OF FIRST PERFORMANCE.
KIEV LANDING VERY ROUGH AND ESCORTS LATER CONCLUDED THAT
AIRPORT WAS CLOSED DUE TO FOG AND SNOW AT TIME AND
PLANE ONLY LANDED DUE TO UNAVAILABILITY OTHER FIELDS.
POOR WEATHER IN MINSK AND POSSIBLE DANGER OF FLIGHT
CAUSED DEPT ESCORT TO BOOK TRAIN TO MINSK, CANCELLING
ORCHESTRA'S FREE DAY ON DECEMBER ONE. MINSK AIRPORT DID
NOT OPERATE ON DECEMBER TWO AND THREE AND CONCERTS WOULD
HAVE BEEN CANCELLED HAD DECEMBER TWO FLIGHT BEEN
ATTEMPTED. ODESSA WAS HIT BY HURRICANE AND ICE STORM
IN LATE NOVEMBER AND ALL LIGHT, POWER AND WATER WAS
INOPERATIVE FORCING CANCELLATION OF ORCHESTRA VISIT
THERE. ADDITIONAL CONCERTS WERE GIVEN IN KIEV BY DECISION
OF GOSK. GOSK DID NOT CLEAR THIS DECISION WITH ORCHESTRA
RESULTING IN CONFLICT ON DECEMBER ONE FREE DAY, TRAIN
TRAVEL AND FINAL KIEV CONCERT NOVEMBER THIRTY.

6. HALLS AND HOTELS. TOUR WAS BOOKED BY GOSK IN MOSCOW
DIRECTLY INTO PHILHARMONIC HALLS WITHOUT INVOLVEMENT OF
LOCAL GOSK OFFICES. LOCAL HALLS THEN HAD RESPONSIBILITY
FOR LOCAL ACCOMMODATIONS AND ONWARD TRAVEL. HOTELS WERE
USUALLY ADEQUATE; HOWEVER, ALL MEMBERS COMPLAINED OF
COLD ROOMS IN MINSK AND TBILISI. FOOD WAS ADEQUATE AND
IN SOME CASES EXCELLENT. HALLS THEMSELVES WERE TOO COLD
FOR PERFORMANCE AND REHEARSALS IN MINSK, TBILISI AND
MOSCOW. REPEATED REQUESTS AND DEMANDS OF ESCORTS
PRODUCED MANY PROMISES BUT LITTLE HEAT. AUTOMOBILE
FOR DIRECTOR DAVIES DISAPPEARED IN LENINGRAD AND
KIEV, HAMPERING SET-UP OF CONSERVATORY PROGRAMS;

HOWEVER, MANAGERS OF BOTH THESE HALLS TOOK PARTICULARLY GOOD CARE OF ORCHESTRA--INCLUDING FREE REPAIR OF BROKEN BASS IN LENINGRAD AND SPECIAL FOOD (CAVIAR, ETC.) ON TRAIN FROM KIEV TO MINSK.

7. PRESS COVERAGE. WITH EMBASSY ASSISTANCE, STATE TV UNCLASSIFIED

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RECORDED OPENING CONCERT IN MOSCOW FOR LATER NATIONWIDE BROADCAST. THREE TV SPOTS APPEARED ON TBILISI TV. TASS DID STORIES IN MOSCOW FOR WIRE SERVICE AND LOCAL STORIES APPEARED DURING ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCES IN LENINGRAD, TBILISI, AND BAKU. KIEV AND MOSCOW RADIO DID PROGRAMS ON ORCHESTRA. CRITIC AND PHOTOGRAPHER FROM MUSICAL LIFE MAGAZINE ATTENDED MOSCOW OPENING CONCERT FOR LATER ARTICLE. SEVERAL OTHER CRITICS INTERVIEWED DAVIES IN MOSCOW FOR ARTICLES TO APPEAR IN FUTURE. FURTHER AIRGRAM ON COVERAGE WILL FOLLOW.

8. ESCORT. DEPT ESCORT BASSET PROVED TIRELESS, RESOURCEFUL, GOOD NATURED, AND WILL BE WELCOMED AS ESCORT IN FUTURE.

9. EVALUATION OF TOUR. SPCO IS EXCELLENT PROFESSIONAL GROUP AND WONDERFUL REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR COUNTRY. CREATIVE AND YOUTHFUL ORCHESTRA PROMOTED VIVID IMAGE OF INNOVATIVENESS AND HIGH STANDARDS OF AMERICAN ARTS.

10. POUCHING FOLLOW-UP AIRGRAM OF SPECIALIZED INFORMATION FOR CU/ARTS.
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